

342 used mainly as the sleeping room of the grown-  
574 up children or the young married couple, if  
they are staying with the parents. Also, the  
guests on their first visit are invited to stay  
in this room. Since the people seldom go to  
this room, its floor is exemplarily clean.  
Often it is covered with a home-woven rug.

● 356 Cleaning the rooms and keeping them in  
order has almost a ritual significance for the  
Votes. The floors and the wall benches were  
formerly scrubbed every Saturday. But before  
great holidays, especially before Easter, the  
cleaning was extended also to the walls and  
even the ceilings. Therefore the walls of the  
Votic rooms, even though they were not white-  
washed or covered with wallpaper, were amazing-  
ly clean. In addition to the washing and  
scrubbing, the old people remember another  
special method for cleaning which was employed  
before festivals and weddings. This was the  
scraping of the walls. The walls of the rooms  
which had no stove were first swept clean of  
soot and then scraped still whiter with a  
special iron tool or with big knives. For  
Christmas, Easter and other great holidays and  
for weddings, the floors were covered with  
[764] straw. When there was a corpse in the house,  
fir branches were strewn on the floors.

584 Customs, superstitions. The Votic  
wedding customs in earlier times were consider-  
ably different from what they are today.  
Porthan tells that at the end of the eighteenth  
century the Votic boys did their wooing as they  
wished, without the knowledge of their or the  
[584] girls' parents. The usual age for marriage was  
15 years for the boys and 12-15 for the girls.  
The young people informed the priest of their